

MADERA COUNTY GENERAL PLAN POLICY DOCUMENT

PART I

LAND USE/CIRCULATION DIAGRAMS AND STANDARDS

Part I first describes the *Land Use Diagram* and, the allowable uses and standards for the land use designations appearing on the diagram. Part I then describes the *Circulation Plan Diagram* designed to support the land uses depicted on the *Land Use Diagram* and the standards for the roadway classification system appearing on the *Circulation Plan Diagram*.

LAND USE DIAGRAM, DESIGNATIONS, AND STANDARDS

LAND USE DIAGRAM

The *Land Use Diagram* (inserted separately) depicts proposed land uses for Madera County. The *Land Use Diagram* functions as official County policy on the allocation and distribution of different land uses in the unincorporated areas.

LAND USE INTENSITY STANDARDS

State law mandates that the General Plan provide standards of population density and building intensity. The land use designations include standards of building intensity for residential and non-residential uses, and include standards of population density for residential uses. These standards are described below.

Residential Uses

Standards of building intensity for residential uses are stated in one of three ways in the land use designations:

- 1) As the allowable range of dwelling units per gross acre.¹ This method is used in the following land use designations: Low Density Residential, Medium Density Residential, High Density Residential, Professional Office, Transit-Oriented Commercial, and Mixed Use Core.
- 2) As the maximum number of dwelling units per gross acre. This method is used in the following land use designations: Open Space, Rural Residential, and Very Low Density Residential.
- 3) As the maximum number of principal dwellings per parcel. This method is used in the following land use designations: Agriculture Exclusive, Agriculture, Agricultural Residential, and Rural Estate Residential.

¹ *Gross acreage* includes all land (including streets and rights-of-way) designated for a particular residential use, while *net acreage* excludes streets and rights-of-way. In urban areas, net acreage is normally about 25 percent less than gross acreage. In rural areas and open space areas, the difference between net and gross can be as low as five percent. Net acreage is the standard typically used in zoning, while gross acreage is more commonly used in general plan designations

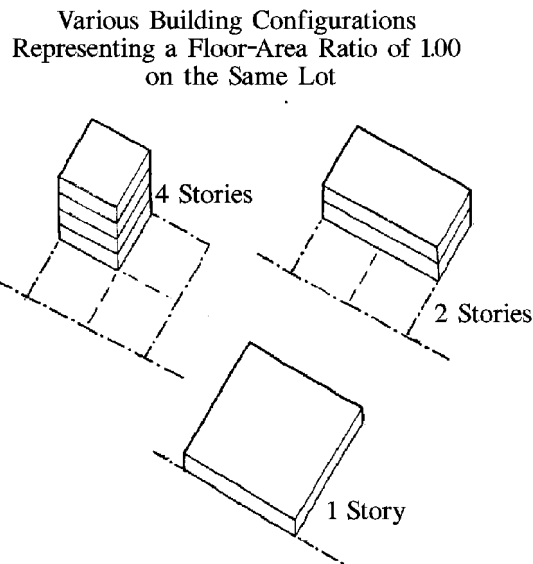
Standards of population density for residential uses can be derived by multiplying the maximum allowable number of dwelling units per gross acre by the average number of persons per dwelling unit assumed for the applicable residential designation. Typically, household sizes are larger in single family homes than in multiple family units; assumed household sizes therefore vary according to the types of housing and densities allowed in each residential designation. The assumed average number of persons per dwelling unit for each residential designation has been extrapolated from estimates by the Department of Finance (DOF) for unincorporated Madera County for 1993.²

Non-residential Uses

Standards of building intensity for non-residential uses are stated as maximum *floor-area ratios* (FARs). A floor-area ratio is the ratio of the gross building square footage on a lot to the net square footage of the lot.

$$FAR = \frac{\text{Total Floor Area}}{\text{Total Lot Area}}$$

Standards of building intensity for non-residential uses are stated in terms of maximum allowable floor-area ratios (FARs). A floor-area ratio is the ratio of the gross building square footage permitted on a lot to the net square footage of the lot. For example, on a lot with 10,000 net square feet of land area, an FAR of 1.00 will allow 10,000 square feet of building floor area to be built, regardless of the number of stories in the building (e.g., 5,000 square feet per floor on two floors or 10,000 square feet on one floor). On the same lot, an FAR of 0.50 would allow 5,000 square feet of floor area, and an FAR of 0.25 would allow 2,500 square feet. The diagram below illustrates how buildings of one, two, and four stories could be developed on a given lot with an FAR of 1.00.



LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

² DOF's 1993 estimate was 3.099 persons per household for unincorporated Madera County

The *General Plan* includes 21 residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, and other land use designations to depict the types of land uses that will be allowed in the different geographic areas of the unincorporated county. Not all land use designations are depicted on the *Draft Land Use Diagram*. Some are intended for use in future area plans.

The following paragraphs describe each land use designation in terms of typical uses and density and intensity standards.

Agriculture Exclusive (AE): This designation provides for agricultural uses, limited agricultural support service uses (e.g., barns, animal feed facilities, silos, stables, fruit stands, and feed stores), agriculturally-oriented services (e.g., wineries, cotton gins), timber production, mineral extraction, airstrips, public and commercial refuse disposal sites, recreational uses, public and quasi public uses, and similar and compatible uses. The minimum parcel size shall be 36 to 640 acres. Allowable residential development in areas designated Agriculture Exclusive designation includes one to two single family homes per parcel, secondary residential units, caretaker/employee housing, and farmworker housing. The FAR for nonresidential uses shall not exceed 0.10 with the following exceptions: the FAR for agriculturally-oriented services shall not exceed 0.25 and the FAR for poultry ranches, greenhouses, and similar uses shall not exceed 0.50. This designation assumes an average of 3.2 persons per dwelling unit.

Agriculture (A): This designation provides for agricultural uses, limited agricultural support service uses (e.g., barns, animal feed facilities, silos, stables, fruit stands, and feed stores), agriculturally-oriented services (e.g., wineries, cotton gins), timber production, mineral extraction, airstrips, public and commercial refuse disposal sites, recreational uses, public and quasi public uses, and similar and compatible uses. The minimum parcel size shall be 18 acres. Allowable residential development in areas designated Agriculture includes one or two single family homes per parcel, secondary residential units, caretaker/employee housing, and farmworker housing. The FAR for nonresidential uses shall not exceed 0.10, with the following exceptions: the FAR for agriculturally-oriented services shall not exceed 0.25 and the FAR for poultry ranches, greenhouses, and similar uses shall not exceed 0.50. This designation assumes an average of 3.2 persons per dwelling unit.

Open Space (OS): This designation provides for low-intensity agricultural uses, grazing, forestry, golf courses, recreational and equestrian uses, major electrical and trunk communication transmission lines, habitat protection, irrigation canals, reservoirs, refuse disposal sites, airports and airstrips, watershed management, public and quasi-public uses, mining, and areas typically unsuitable for human occupation due to public health and safety hazards such as earthquake faults, floodways, unstable soils, or areas containing wildlife habitat and other environmentally-sensitive features. Limited residential uses may not exceed 0.05 units per gross acre. The FAR for nonresidential uses shall not exceed 0.10. This designation assumes an average of 3.2 persons per dwelling unit.

Agricultural Residential (AR): This designation provides for single family detached homes, secondary residential units, limited agricultural uses, public and quasi-public uses, and similar and compatible uses. The minimum parcel size shall be 10 acres. Residential densities shall be limited to two single family homes per parcel and secondary residential units. The FAR for nonresidential uses shall not exceed 0.10. This designation assumes an average of 3.2 persons per dwelling unit.

Rural Estate Residential (RER): This designation provides for single family detached homes, secondary residential units, limited agricultural uses, public and quasi-public uses, and similar and compatible uses. The minimum parcel size shall be 5 acres. Residential densities shall be limited to two single family homes per parcel and secondary residential units. The FAR for nonresidential uses shall not exceed 0.10. This

designation assumes an average of 3.2 persons per dwelling unit. NOTE: This designation is not applied on the *Draft Land Use Diagram*.

Rural Residential (RR): This designation provides for single family detached homes, secondary residential units, limited agricultural uses, public and quasi-public uses, and similar and compatible uses. Residential densities shall not exceed 0.5 units per gross acre. The FAR for nonresidential uses shall not exceed 0.30. This designation assumes an average of 3.2 persons per dwelling unit.

Very Low Density Residential (VLDR): This designation provides for single family detached and attached homes, secondary residential units, bed-and-breakfast establishments, limited agricultural uses, public and quasi-public uses, and similar and compatible uses. Residential densities shall not exceed 2.0 units per gross acre. The FAR for nonresidential uses shall not exceed 0.30. This designation assumes an average of 3.2 persons per dwelling unit.

Low Density Residential (LDR): This designation provides for single family detached and attached homes, secondary residential units, bed-and-breakfast establishments, limited agricultural uses, public and quasi-public uses, and similar and compatible uses. Residential densities shall be in the range of 1.0 to 7.5 units per gross acre. The FAR for nonresidential uses shall not exceed 0.30. This designation assumes an average of 3.2 persons per dwelling unit.

Medium Density Residential (MDR): This designation provides for single family detached and attached homes, duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, garden apartments, mobilehome parks, group quarters, bed-and-breakfast establishments, public and quasi-public uses, and similar and compatible uses. Residential densities shall be in the range of 5.0 to 12.0 units per gross acre. The FAR for nonresidential uses shall not exceed 0.30. This designation assumes an average of 2.9 persons per dwelling unit.

High Density Residential (HDR): This designation provides for multiple-family residential units, group quarters, mobilehome parks, bed-and-breakfast establishments, professional offices, public and quasi-public uses, and similar and compatible uses. Offices may be allowed with discretionary approval. Residential densities shall be in the range of 12.0 to 25.0 units per gross acre. This designation assumes an average of 2.75 persons per dwelling unit. The FAR for nonresidential uses shall not exceed 0.40.

Neighborhood Commercial (NC): This designation provides for neighborhood and locally-oriented retail and service uses, public and quasi-public uses, and similar and compatible uses. The FAR shall not exceed 0.40.

Community Commercial (CC): This designation provides for retail, wholesale, services, restaurants, professional and administrative offices, hotels and motels, public and quasi-public uses, and similar and compatible uses. The FAR shall not exceed 0.60 except within downtown commercial areas or village core areas, where a maximum FAR of 1.00 is allowed.

Highway Service Commercial (HSC): This designation provides for restaurants, service stations, truck stops, hotels and motels, and retail and amusement uses that are oriented principally to highway and through traffic, public and quasi-public uses, and similar and compatible uses. The FAR shall not exceed 0.40.

Heavy Commercial (HC): This designation provides for land extensive retail (e.g., nurseries, tire stores, automobile sales, auto body and repair shops, lumber yards), warehouses, wholesale commercial uses,

offices, public and quasi-public uses, and similar and compatible uses. The FAR shall not exceed 0.40.

Professional Office (PO): This designation provides for professional and administrative offices, medical offices and clinics, public and quasi-public uses, and limited retail commercial uses. Multiple family residential uses may be allowed with discretionary approval. The FAR shall not exceed 0.75. Residential densities shall be in the range of 12.0 to 25.0 units per gross acre. This designation assumes an average of 2.75 persons per dwelling unit.

Transit-Oriented Commercial (TOC): This designation provides for a variety of uses focused on and linked to intermodal transit centers. This designation is applied to areas around existing or future transit centers. Allowable uses are multiple family units, retail, restaurants, services, professional and administrative offices, light industrial, research and development, public and quasi-public uses, and similar and compatible uses. All development under this designation shall be approved pursuant to an adopted master development plan. Development in transit-oriented commercial centers can focus on residential uses or employment-related uses, depending on the location of the transit center. Transit-oriented commercial centers shall be characterized by the following features:

- Transit-oriented commercial areas shall be from 2 to 10 acres in size.
- Transit-oriented commercial centers in residential areas would include a mix of high density residential uses, retail and service uses, civic uses, and institutional uses.
- Transit-oriented commercial centers in employment areas would include a mix of light industrial, research and development, and retail and service uses.
- Residential densities shall be in the range of 12.0 to 30.0 units per gross acre. The FAR shall not exceed 1.00 for non-residential uses. This designation assumes an average of 2.50 persons per dwelling unit.

Mixed Use Core (MUC): This designation provides for a variety of uses, including residential, commercial, office, and public and quasi-public uses. This designation is applied to areas planned for new downtown and community hub areas of planned new communities. Allowable uses are attached single family homes, multiple family units, retail, restaurants, services, commercial recreation, administrative and professional offices, public and quasi-public uses, and similar and compatible uses. All development under this designation shall be approved pursuant to an adopted master development plan. Two types of mixed use cores are designated: community core and village core. Designated Mixed Use Cores shall be characterized by the following features:

- Community Core must be from 60 to 75 acres in size and Village Core must be from 30 to 40 acres in size.
- Land use and circulation pattern that facilitates transit and bicycle use and pedestrian accessibility (including provision of transit stops and reservation of right-of-way for future transit service). Where transit centers are planned, the area should be designated as a transit-oriented commercial area.
- A mix of high density residential, retail shops and commercial services, restaurants, offices, and public/institutional uses such as post offices, parks, libraries, and schools.

Master development plans shall provide for development according to a general policy goal of maintaining the following mix of land uses for community and village cores:

- Community Core: 25 percent Medium and High Density Residential, 50 percent Community Commercial, 17 percent Professional Office, 5 percent Public Institutional, and 3 percent Open Space (for parks and recreation).
- Village Core: 50 percent Medium and High Density Residential, 40 percent Community Commercial, 7 percent Public Institutional, and 3 percent Open Space (for parks and recreation).

Residential densities shall be in the range of 12.0 to 30.0 units per gross acre. The FAR shall not exceed 1.00 for non-residential uses. This designation assumes an average of 2.75 persons per dwelling unit.

Light Industrial/Business Park (LI): This designation provides for industrial parks, research and development, warehouses, light manufacturing, general commercial uses, professional offices, airports and airstrips, outdoor theaters, public and quasi-public uses, and similar and compatible uses. The FAR shall not exceed 0.50.

Heavy Industrial (HI): This designation provides for industrial parks, warehouses, manufacturing, airports and airstrips, outdoor theaters, public and quasi-public uses, and similar and compatible uses. The FAR shall not exceed 0.50.

Public Institutional (PI): This designation provides for institutional uses such as colleges, schools, hospitals, sanitariums, penal institutions, libraries, government offices and courts, churches, meeting halls, cemeteries and mausoleums, public or institutional laboratories, and similar and compatible uses. The FAR shall not exceed 0.90.

New Growth Area (NGA): This designation applies to areas where extensive new developments are planned to serve as significant new growth areas in Madera County. All development under this designation shall be approved pursuant to an adopted area plan. As these area plans are approved, the New Growth Area designation shall be replaced by other land use designations. Prior to adoption and implementation of an area plan, allowable uses shall include those specified under the Agriculture (A) and Open Space (OS) designations.

Table I-1 specifies for each land use designation the standards for minimum lot size, the allowable range or maximum number of dwelling units per gross acre, and the maximum allowable floor-area-ratio for non-residential uses.

TABLE I-1
SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS
by Land Use Designation

Land Use Designation	DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS		
	Minimum Lot Area	Range/Maximum DUs per Gross Acre or Maximum DUs per Parcel	Maximum Non-residential FAR
Agriculture Exclusive (AE)	36 to 640 acres (as determined by zoning)	Maximum 2 DUs per parcel*	0.10 except agricultural services where maximum is 0.25 and poultry ranches, greenhouses where maximum is 0.50
Agriculture (A)	18 acres or as determined by zoning	Maximum 2 DUs per parcel*	0.10 except agricultural service uses where maximum is 0.25 and poultry ranches, greenhouses where maximum is 0.50
Open Space (OS)	None	Maximum 0.05 DUs per gross acre	0.10
Agricultural Residential (AR)	10 acres	Maximum 2 DUs per parcel*	0.10
Rural Estate Residential (RER)	5 acres	Maximum 2 DUs per parcel	0.10
Rural Residential (RR)	As determined by zoning	Maximum 0.5 DUs per gross acre	0.30
Very Low Density Residential (VLDR)	As determined by zoning	Maximum 2 DUs per gross acre	0.30
Low Density Residential (LDR)	As determined by zoning	1 to 7.5 DUs per gross acre	0.30
Medium Density Residential (MDR)	As determined by zoning	5 to 12 DUs per gross acre	0.30
High Density Residential (HDR)	As determined by zoning	12 to 25 DUs per gross acre	0.40
Neighborhood Commercial (NC)	As determined by zoning	n/a	0.40
Community Commercial (CC)	As determined by zoning	n/a	0.60 except in downtown areas where maximum is 1.00
Highway Service Commercial (HSC)	As determined by zoning	n/a	0.40
Heavy Commercial (HC)	As determined by zoning	n/a	0.40
Professional Office (PO)	As determined by zoning	12 to 25 DUs per gross acre	0.75
Transit-Oriented Commercial (TOC)	2 to 10 acres	12 to 30 DUs per gross acre	1.00
Mixed Use Core (MUC)	Community core-- 60 to 75 acres; Village core--30 to 40 acres	12 to 30 DUs per gross acre	1.00
Light Industrial/Business Park (LI)	As determined by zoning	n/a	0.50
Heavy Industrial (HI)	As determined by zoning	n/a	0.50
Public Institutional (PI)	As determined by zoning	n/a	0.90
New Growth Area (NGA)	Will be based on adopted State Center Community College area plan not to exceed maximums in Table I-2		

*Not including secondary residential units, caretaker/employee housing, or farmworker housing

TABLE I-2			
MAXIMUM DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS FOR DESIGNATED NEW GROWTH AREA			
New Growth Area	Maximum Number of Dwelling Units	Maximum Population	Maximum Number of Employees
State Center Community College Area	4,500	14,000	6,800

CIRCULATION PLAN DIAGRAM AND STANDARDS

ROADWAY SYSTEM

The *Circulation Plan Diagram* (Figure I-1) for the *General Plan* depicts the proposed circulation system for unincorporated Madera County to support development under the *Land Use Diagram*. This circulation system is shown on the diagram by means of a set of roadway classifications. The roadway classification system has been developed to guide Madera County's long-range planning and programming. Roadways are classified in this system based on the linkages they provide and their function, both of which reflect their importance to the land use pattern, traveler, and general welfare.

Roadways have two functions, which conflict from a design standpoint: to provide mobility and to provide property access. High and constant speeds are desirable for mobility, while low speeds are more desirable for property access. A functional classification system provides for specialization in meeting the access and mobility requirements of the development permitted under the *General Plan*. Local streets emphasize property access; highways, expressways, and arterials emphasize high mobility for through-traffic; and collectors attempt to achieve a balance between both functions.

Table I-3 describes the roadway classification definitions. Figure I-1, the *Circulation Plan Diagram*, presents the official functional classification of existing and proposed streets, roadways, and highways in Madera County. This diagram depicts the freeways, highways, and the arterial and collector roadway system in Madera County. All other roadways are classified as local streets.

TABLE I-3

ROADWAY CLASSIFICATION DEFINITIONS

Roadway Type	Function	Access	Typical Spacing	Typical Cross-section	Discussion
Freeway	Provides for inter- and intra-regional mobility	Provided at intervals of 1-3 miles at interchanges only	5-10 miles	4-8 lanes	Includes SR 99 and proposed SR 41 between San Joaquin River and Avenue 12
Highway	State Highways: serve long-distance trips with lower demand than freeway	Should be limited to inter-sections with freeways, expressways and arterials; in rural areas, may have some direct access to parcels	2-5 miles	2-6 lanes	Includes all State Highways not classified as freeway
Expressway	Provides for intra-county or inter-city connectivity between major activity centers	Limited to intersections with highways, arterials and major traffic generators	2-5 miles (primarily in urbanizing areas)	4-6 lanes	Not currently proposed in Madera County. Traffic signals typically spaced at one mile increments
Arterial	Provides moderate volume connections between activity centers and connections from collectors to freeways, highways and expressways	Can intersect with any facility, though access to local roads and driveways should be minimized	1 mile	2-6 lanes	Traffic signals typically spaced at ¼ to ½ mile intervals
Collector	Serves as low-volume connector between local streets and arterials; also provides access to parcels	Access to other roadways not restricted; driveways should be no closer than 50 feet to major intersections	½ mile	2 lanes	Controlled by two- or four-way stop signs or signals at ¼ mile intervals
Local	Provides access to parcels	Access is not restricted	200-500 feet	2 lanes	Not depicted on <i>Circulation Plan Diagram</i>